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**Testimony of Landis Larson, ND AFL-CIO President
In Opposition to HB 1175
March 10, 2021**

Chairperson Klein and members of the Senate Industry, Business and Labor Committee:

My name is Landis Larson, President of the North Dakota AFL-CIO. The North Dakota AFL-CIO is the federation of labor unions in North Dakota, representing the interests of all working people in our state.

I am testifying on behalf of the North Dakota AFL-CIO in opposition to House Bill 1175.

The North Dakota AFL-CIO strongly opposes any attempts to shield corporations or other employers from civil liability, particularly in regard to COVID-19.

We know that many employers are good actors doing the best they can to protect their employees, but we also know that there are also many employers that are not doing everything they can to protect their workers. We have read the headlines about some of these employers, but many we haven't because workers fear retaliation for speaking up about unsafe working conditions or their concerns go unheard.

This bill relies on a well-defined and fully-functioning regulatory structure in place to ensure that corporations and other employers are in fact doing all they can to protect employees without the threat of civil liability. We know that up to this point, neither employers or workers have much to go on as far as enforceable safety rules from federal, state or local officials when it comes to infectious diseases in the workplace. Shielding these bad actors from litigation would only encourage them to ignore the scant guidelines on infectious diseases in the workplace and putting working families at risk of COVID-19 without legal recourse.

I recommend a "Do Not Pass" recommendation on House Bill 1175.

Respectfully Submitted,
Landis Larson
North Dakota AFL-CIO President